



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

DIVISION OF PURCHASE AND PROPERTY

Purchase Bureau

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October 25, 2005

Ref: 06-X-37559 Library Supplies, School Supplies & Teaching Aids, var. State Agencies
Bid Opening Date: November 30, 2005

Addendum # 1 - Electronic Questions & Answers

Question #1	On the price list page 9, item 29 and 30. Can you please let me know what test you are looking for? I'm not sure if there is anything on the RFP that we can bid on. Answer: Lines 29 and 30 are for all tests and scoring devices: Achievement , Aptitude, Intelligence, etc. Line 29 requires a discount off a price list or catalog for the purchase of tests up to \$1,000.00. Line 30 requires a discount off a price list or catalog for the purchase of tests over \$1,000.00.
Question #2	I am in the process of making travel arrangements to attend the Mandatory Pre-bid Conference for Solicitation 06-X-37559. Would you be able to provide an approximate ending time of the Conference? Also, is there a registration process prior to the actual conference? Answer: The Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled to begin at 10:00 A.M. on November 2, 2005. A conference normally runs from 1 ½ to 2 ½ hours. However, as this conference will include instructions on how to do an E-Bid, the Purchase Bureau can make no guarantees. A best-guess estimate would be a total of 2 ½ hours, but as stated, there are no guarantees. All bidders represented at the conference must complete a Bidder's Conference Attendance Record card and the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference sign in sheet that will be available at the conference.
Question #3	Is this the bid to encompass library furniture? Answer: No. Section 3.2 of the RFP includes a list of items that are not eligible for award for this solicitation. All furniture and shelving is identified in the list of ineligible items.
Question #4	On the price sheet, Line #s 9 through 12 refer to "reading programs." I take this to mean computer software that helps kids to read, or assist by improving comprehension. Yet in the RFP, on page 10, item # 3.2 it is stated that "Language Labs, computer hardware and software" is ineligible. Can you clarify this?

	<p>Answer: Reading programs and similar types of software, that are intended for teaching purposes are permitted in this RFP. However, language labs, computers and computer software are excluded from this contract.</p>
<p>Question #5</p>	<p>I see the new language relative to requiring vendors to provide the best possible price, paragraph 6.1.4. Can you say if this was developed as part of the Strategic Sourcing initiative?</p> <p>Answer: This language has been included in assorted multiple vendor RFP's for over two years.</p>
<p>Question #6</p>	<p>XYZ is a catalog distributor for electronic components that would be used in the classroom for electronics courses and for repair of computers and other electronic equipment for the state. I would not be able to attend the mandatory pre-bid conference. Does this mean I should not bid the solicitations 06-X-37559?</p> <p>Answer: Section 1.3.3 of the RFP states, "Bid proposals will be automatically rejected from any bidder that was not represented or failed to properly register at the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference." Bidders who are unable to attend the conference, may send a representative to the conference, who can attend and register its company. If any bidder believes that their product meets the specifications that are included within the specific categories stating what is required for this RFP, and that bidder believes it will give value to the State, that bidder should seriously consider placing a bid.</p>
<p>Question #7</p>	<p>The last contract for Library Supplies, School Supplies and Teaching Aids was awarded to Cascade and School Specialty, both general school suppliers. As an art supply company, we carry more of what art teachers require than general companies but do not carry any of the other categories listed on the RFP. Is it the intent of your organization to award to only suppliers able to provide a range of materials but not depth in one particular area? Your answer to this question will determine whether or not my company chooses to outlay the expense of attending the pre-bid conference. Please respond prior to October 24th so that I will have time to make airline and accommodation reservations as needed to attend.</p> <p>Answer: It is the intention of the Purchase Bureau to award multiple source contracts against this proposal. Section 4.4.4 "Price Sheet Instruction," instructs bidders to bid a discount off the most current catalogs and/or price lists on the corresponding price lines for the specific brands they are selling.</p>
<p>Question #8</p>	<p>We have received a mailed solicitation from the State of NJ to bid on 06-X-37559. We are looking at Line no. 31 & 32. We are unsure as to how to determine Quantities, Lot, Unit, Discount% and such. We are unsure as to how to proceed with the solicitation.</p> <p>Answer: Lines 31 and 32 are for library supplies as described on the pricing lines. The discount off the price list or catalog submitted with the RFP should be listed in the discount column of the pricing lines.</p>
<p>Question #9</p>	<p>Has the format changed to a discount off a specified category from a combination of priced items & discount and done on the last bid? If so, why?</p>

	<p>Answer: Yes, the format has changed from a market basket to a multiple source award. Responses from contract users indicated the previous contracts did not meet the needs of the users.</p>
Question #10	<p>Under Standard terms/conditions page 2-2.2. Is it possible to put in a limitation to this term excluding situations of gross negligence, such as willful misconduct on the part of New Jersey employees?</p> <p>Answer: No.</p>
Question #11	<p>Page 6-4.2 Is it allowable to have a order value minimum in place that schools would need to meet in order to receive free shipping?</p> <p>Answer: A minimum order of \$50.00 list will be required for free shipping.</p>
Question #12	<p>Page 14 4.4.2 Does the State want to receive their discounted pricing on a CD or is the list price wanted?</p> <p>Answer: Section 3.3 of the RFP states, "All applicable pricing information catalogs and/or price lists must be submitted with the bid in order to receive consideration for an award." The bidder must submit a discount off list price – consequently a dated paper list pricelist is needed in order to receive an award. Bidders are also encouraged to submit a CD. The prices on the CD must be the same as the prices on the paper pricelist.</p>
Question #13	<p>Page 18 5.4 For vendors who offer a discount off catalog list prices, what is the procedure and time frame for submitting price increases when new annual catalogs are published? Pricing on the bid will be submitted off of the current 2005 catalog. When will 2006 catalog pricing be allowed to go into effect?</p> <p>Answer: Section 3.4 of the RFP states, "In the second year of the contract, the contractors must provide its updated catalogs and or price lists to both the Purchase Bureau, and the users of this contract. The updated items will be subject to the original discount as stated in the NOA and any extension thereof."</p>
Question #14	<p>Page 21 5.18.1 If Mastercard is being used, what is the transaction fee?</p> <p>Answer: The fee varies and is charged by the bank. Information regarding the use of the p-card can be found in section 4.5 of the Standard Terms and Conditions.</p>
Question #15	<p>Please describe the technology behind the ecatalog and describe the actual administrative and purchasing flow through the system. This information is critical to assessing the resources and time required to complete the EDI linking.</p> <p>Answer: Ecatalog is currently in the first stages of development and consequently no details of its final methods, procedures or technology are available. Its final implementation into the procurement system of the State of NJ is tentatively scheduled for some time in the summer of 2006, but the operative words are "tentatively scheduled". It will not be mandatory for any awarded contractor to join in the Ecatalog method of procurement.</p>
Question #16	<p>What systems does/will NJ utilize to process the electronic purchase orders. What data standards, sets and formats will be used? Will the PO's be sent in cXML, or other format? What are</p>

	<p>the EDI specifications, if EDI will be used?</p> <p>Answer: See question #15.</p>
Question #17	<p>Will the State be awarding a primary and secondary for categories, ie. Library, arts/crafts, atlases/globes/maps?</p> <p>Answer: No. Multiple source contracts will be made as described in Section 3.0 of the specifications.</p>
Question #18	<p>Should general school science supplies of various types be offered under this proposal or is another proposal for science supplies scheduled for later?</p> <p>Answer: Yes general school science supplies are being requested under this contract.</p>
Question #19	<p>Section 3.0 – Commodity Description/Scope of Work. This section states that it is the intention of the Purchase Bureau to award multiple source contracts against this proposal. Is it known how many vendors will be awarded per commodity? Is it known if more vendors will be awarded per commodity than were awarded with the last state contract?</p> <p>Answer: The number of awardees will not be decided until the evaluation is completed.</p>
Question #20	<p>Section 5.10 – Items Ordered & Delivered. If an awarded vendor received an order with contracted and non-contracted items, would the vendor need to contact the purchasing agency and have the purchase order split out?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, contract and non-contract items must be procured on separate purchase orders.</p>
Question #21	<p>Is the awarded vendor restricted to only selling items that were awarded?</p> <p>Answer: Section 5.10 of the RFP states, "the Using Agencies are authorized to order and the contractors are authorized to ship only those items covered by the contracts resulting from this RFP."</p>
Question #22	<p>Section 5.17 – Substitution or Addition of Subcontractor(s). Does using a freight service (like UPS) constitute as a subcontractor for delivery of purchased materials?</p> <p>Answer: No.</p>
Question #23	<p>Section 6.1 Contract Evaluation 6.1.1 Price. We know that comparing percentage discounts by vendor can often be misleading. Some companies will raise their list price so that larger percentage discounts are offered in competitive bidding opportunities. Our goal is to offer a competitive price up front for all of our customers. We know that in reality it is the bottom line price of an item that is the fairest comparison. How will the final price of items be factored in when comparing flat percentage discounts?</p> <p>Answer: The Purchase Bureau will use a method of evaluation that will take into account the different variables specific to this contract. Bidders should</p>

	all be aware of the statements in the first paragraph of Section 3.0.
Question #24	Section 6.1 Contract Evaluation 6.1.2 Experience of the bidder. Are letters of recommendation accepted as part of our proposal? Answer: References should be listed on the Bidders Data Packet.
Question #25	Section 6.1 – Contract Evaluation 6.1.4. What is the collective referenced as “EDS”? Answer: Educational Data Services
Question #26	Are there areas of performance that are of concern with previously awarded vendors? Answer: No.
Question #27	How is the quality of vendors products evaluated? Answer: The Purchase Bureau will make comparisons based on information provided by the contract users.
Question #28	Will sample items from vendors be requested for comparison and review? Answer: No.
Question #29	Drop shipping can be common with some vendors, which may result in multiple invoicing and receiving of goods. Will vendors be evaluated on complete shipments and easy invoicing? Answer: The Purchase Bureau cannot evaluate based on this information until the contracts have been awarded. Short shipments are not acceptable. Delivery must be made in accordance with Section 3.6 of the Terms and Conditions. If continuous backorders occur, using agencies can file a formal complaint through the Contract Compliance Unit.
Question #30	Is there funding available for school districts to order from non-awarded vendors? Answer: This question does not refer to the RFP.
Question #31	Section 3.5 Contractor Website 1. Is the State planning on hosting and managing the eCatalog application? If so, which application will be used and what is the timeframe for implementation? Answer: See question #15.
Question #32	Who will determine the State contract authorized users and what will be the process for setting up their system access? Answer: See question #15.
Question #33	Will contractors be required to provide both eCatalog information as well as “Punch-out” capability? Answer: See question #15.
Question #34	Will purchase orders be delivered electronically (other than email) so that the State and the contractors can create an integrated, system-to-system transaction? Answer: See question #15.

Question #35	<p>Is there a requirement to provide invoices electronically as well as accepting major credit cards?</p> <p>Answer: The state does not have electronic invoicing, however, use of the p-card is encouraged.</p>
Question #36	<p>What reassessment of contract delivery requirements do you anticipate as a result of the electronic ordering process?</p> <p>Answer: See question #15.</p>
Question #37	<p>Reference Paragraph 3.4 – Price Lists and Catalogs 2 General question. The present wording of paragraph 3.4 indicates that the pricing offered in the bid must be held firm for a 12-month period before it can be replaced by a new catalog and/or price list. We request that you allow for catalog/price list replacements by the vendor, according to its schedule, with the proviso that such catalog/price list replacements shall not exceed one in any 12-month period. This will reduce any confusion and errors based on what happens when a new catalog is released by the vendor, and the normal confusion as to which catalog prevails for pricing an item. It further allows for an updated catalog and/or price list once every 12 months if the contract is extended. Thus, we propose that the first sentence of Section 3.4 be amended to read: “After the contract is awarded, and during the term of the contract or any extensions thereto, vendors may submit an updated catalog and/or price list to the Purchase Bureau and the users of this contract once at any time during any 12-month period.”</p> <p>Answer: The new updated catalog and/or price list may be submitted only after the first year of the contract is completed.</p>
Question #38	<p>We represent a firm that has two separate business operating units, each of which publishes separate and discrete catalogs for items within the scope of this RFP (one of the business units focuses on fine arts supplies). The two operating units have the same federal identification number. Is there any issue if the two operating units submit separate bids based on the pricing in their separate and discrete catalogs?</p> <p>Answer: No, but the mechanism for submitting two separate bids will be discussed at the conference..</p>
Question #39	<p>Section 3.0, p 10. Will the bid for agendas/student planners (Lines 00025 and 00026 on Price Sheet) be awarded to one vendor, or to multiple vendors?</p> <p>Answer: Same as question #7. All lines will be awarded to multiple vendors, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the State.</p>
Question #40	<p>Section 3.3, p. 10 Company XYZ offers different pricing for different agenda lines, formats, options, covers, and sizes. Will the discount % we bid simply be applied across the board on all of the various pricing?</p> <p>Answer: Yes. The discount offered must reflect the total list price dollar value of any order placed and must apply to the catalog(s) and/or price</p>

	list(s) submitted for each category for the entire contract period.
Question #41	<p>Section 3.6 P. 11. Does the bid require delivery in 10 days for student agendas/planners involving individual school customization options?</p> <p>Answer: With the exception of orders involving individual school customization options, delivery is to be made within ten working days ARO. Invoices will be processed once orders are complete.</p>
Question #42	<p>After attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference will we be given Formal Bid documents?</p> <p>Answer: No. Bidders are required to download the RFP. See General Instructions on the following website http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/bid/summary/06x37559.shtml</p>
Question #43	<p>Is there a market basket of products?</p> <p>Answer: No</p>
Question #44	<p>Do we have to respond to every item in the basket for the bid to be valid?</p> <p>Answer: No. See answer #43.</p>
Question #45	<p>3.6 Delivery must be made within 10 days ARO. How will backorders be addressed? Will they be allowed?</p> <p>Answer: Delivery must be made in accordance with Section 3.6 of the Terms and Conditions. If continuous backorders occur, using agencies can file a formal complaint through the Contract Compliance Unit.</p>